

REMEMBER • CRAIG • BOYD

DEADLY CLASS™



1988

#17

DIE FOR ME PART ONE



The Story So Far...

When homeless orphan San Franciscan teen Marcus Lopez was asked to join Kings Dominion Atelier of the Deadly Arts, a shadowy school specializing in training the next generation of the world's deadliest assassins, he expected trouble wouldn't be far behind. But he had no idea.

Naturally distrusting, Marcus had trouble fitting into his new surroundings. But with time he made a small circle of friends: Saya, the raven-haired Yakuza's daughter. Willie, a young gangbanger from LA. Billy, a quick-witted punk and Petra, a gloomy Goth girl.

While Saya and Willie hail from long-standing underworld dynasties, Marcus, Billy and Petra all joined the academy as street kids, collectively called "rats" by their fellow classmates. They are unaffiliated with any established criminal empire. Distracted by the life and death day-to-day of his school, as well as a string of unhappy romances and a deep dark stint with drug addiction, Marcus never thought too much about this...but all that is about to change.

The first year of school is almost over. Headmaster Lin gathers the freshman into the auditorium and gives them their final exam: kill all the rats.

Finals have begun.

DEADLY CLASS created by Rick Remender & Wes Craig

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MY NAME IS MARCUS
LOPEZ ARGUELLO.

I'M PROBABLY
ABOUT TO DIE.

SHOULD HAVE BEEN
DEAD YEARS AGO REALLY.



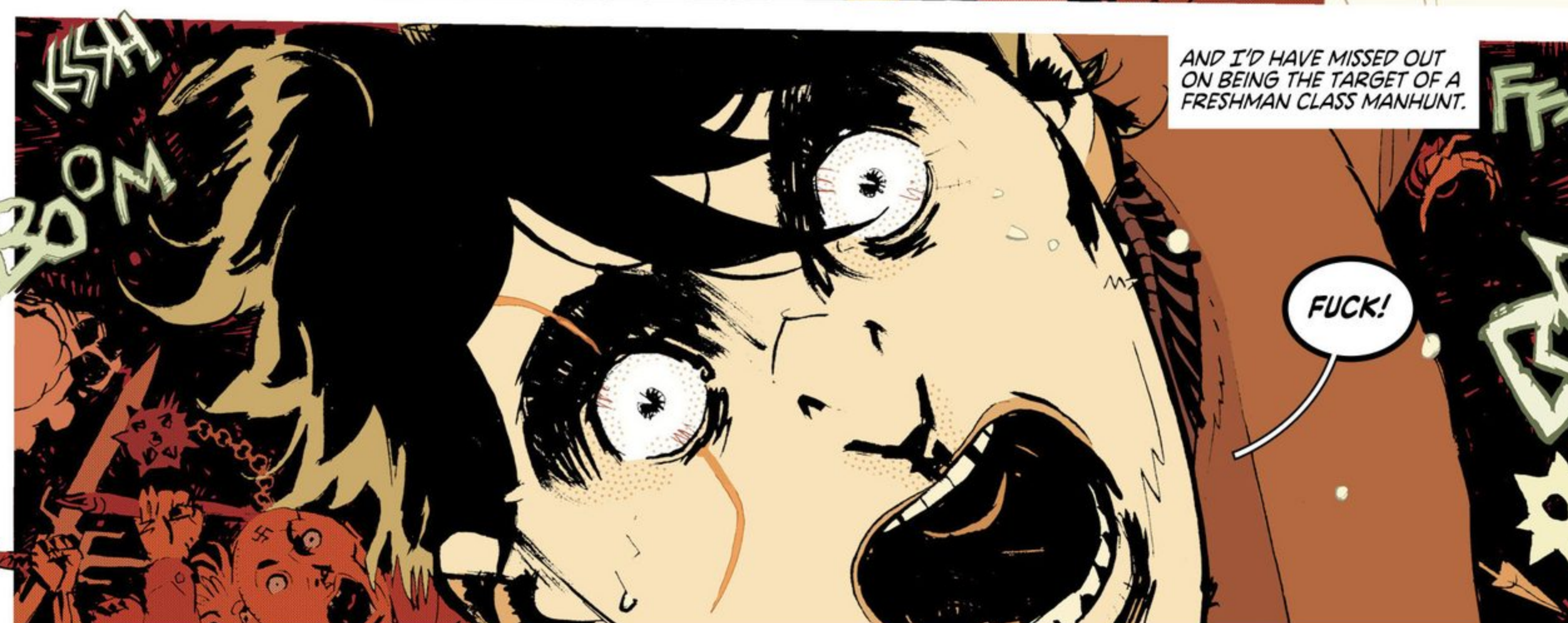
IF THE BRIDGE JUMPER WHO
CRUSHED MY PARENTS LEAPT
A SINGLE SECOND LATER--
I WOULD BE.

I'D HAVE MISSED
ALL THE FUN.

NEVER WOULD'VE
JOINED A SCHOOL
FOR ASSASSINS.

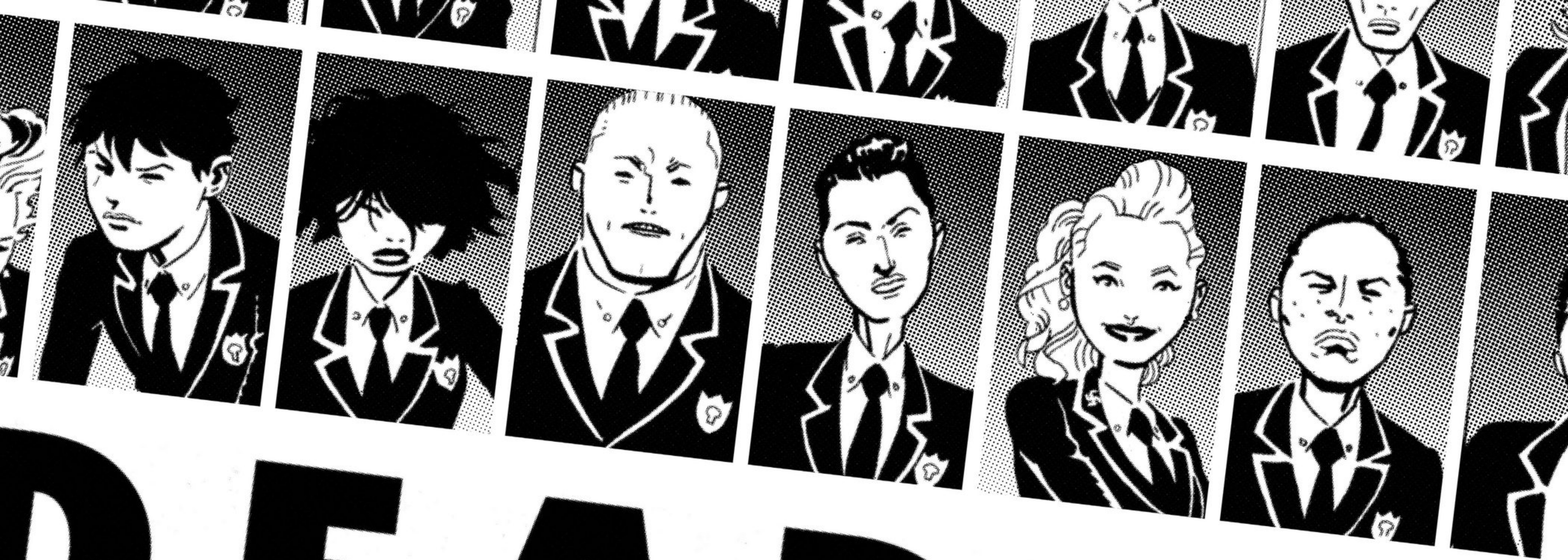


WOULDN'T HAVE KILLED MY FAVORITE
TEACHER IN A BOTCHED ATTEMPT TO
MURDER THE RUSSIAN ASSHOLE WHO
WAS BLACKMAILING ME.



AND I'D HAVE MISSED OUT
ON BEING THE TARGET OF A
FRESHMAN CLASS MANHUNT.

FUCK!



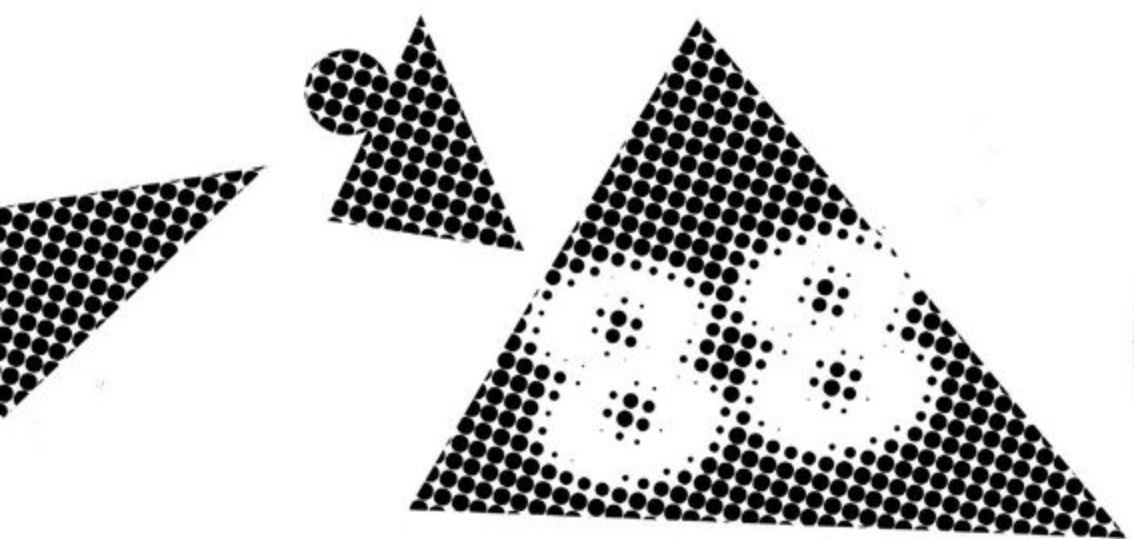
DEADLY CLASSES

RICK REMENDER WES CRAIG
writer-co-creators-artist

JORDAN BOYD
colorist

RUS WOOTON
letterer

SEBASTIAN GIRNER
editor







IT'S NOT THE FIRST TIME
I'VE KILLED SOMEONE--



--BUT IT IS THE FIRST
TIME I DON'T FEEL
ANYTHING AFTERWARDS.

GIVE ME
A B!

GIVE ME
AN E!

GIVE ME
AN S!

GIVE ME
A T!

WHAT'S
THAT
SPELL?!



BEST!
BEST!

PUT US
TO THE
TEST!

WE'LL
BEAT THE
RATS!

WE WON'T
GIVE 'EM A
REST!



NOT
LIKE
THIS...

ATTACK!
ATTACK!

AGH--!

DEATH
SPIRIT SQUAD
ATTACK!

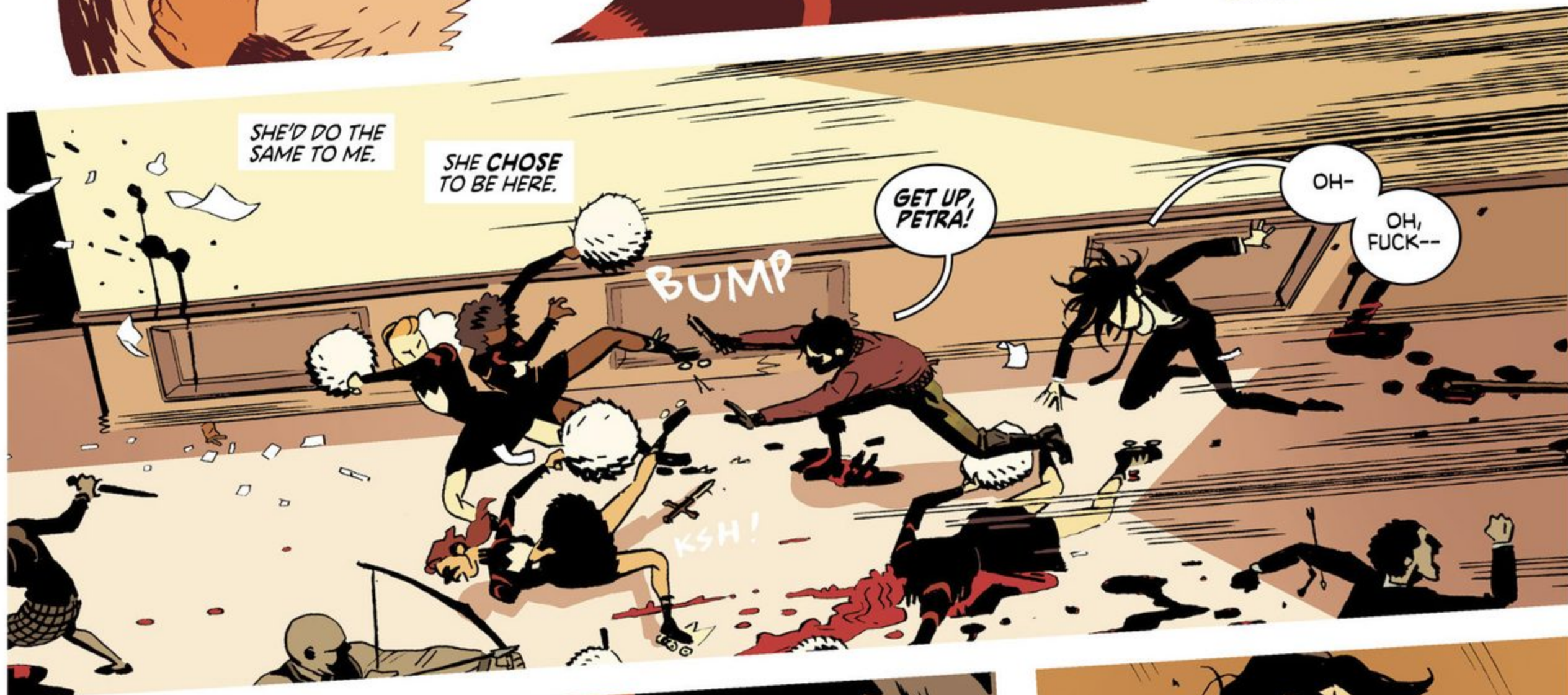
GOTH
BITCH
WATCH
OUT--

--YOU
BETTER
GET
BACK!



MADISON SCHMITT.

DAUGHTER OF MID-WESTERN SYNDICATE BOSS.



SHE'D DO THE SAME TO ME.

SHE CHOSE TO BE HERE.

GET UP, PETRA!

OH--

OH, FUCK---



AND I DON'T CARE.

I'LL KILL YOU!

AND LIKE MASTER ZANE TAUGHT US--

--ONCE YOU DON'T CARE --



--YOU'RE FINALLY AN EFFECTIVE ASSASSIN.

YOU ARE, LIKE--

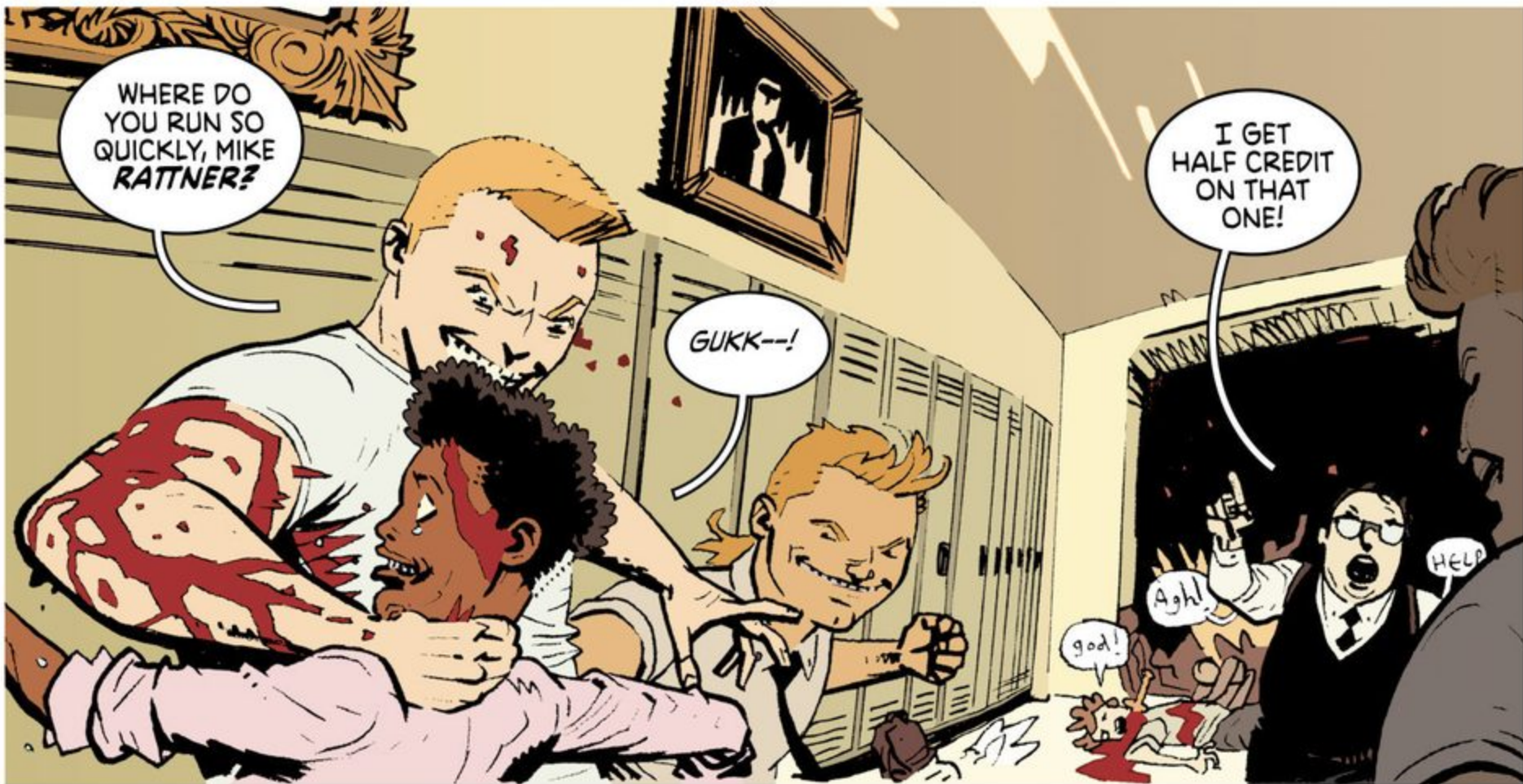


--SUCH A FUCKING LOSER.

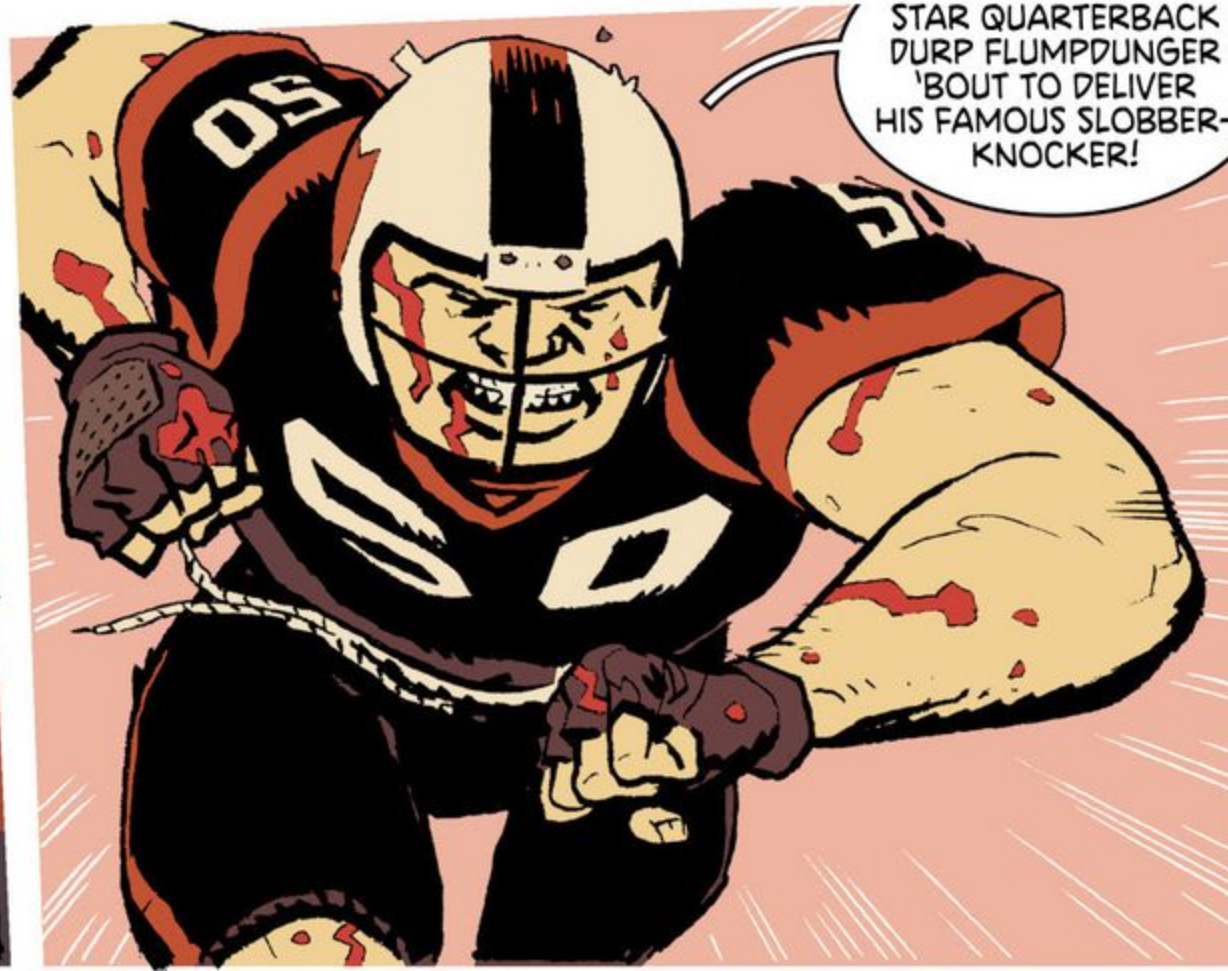
RAZORS IN THE POM-POM CUT DEEP--

--SKIN
AND
PRIDE.











1-2-3-4-FUCK
THEIR BRAINS
ALL OVER THE
FLOOR!



OR RUN
RIGHT
THROUGH
AN OPEN
DOOR!

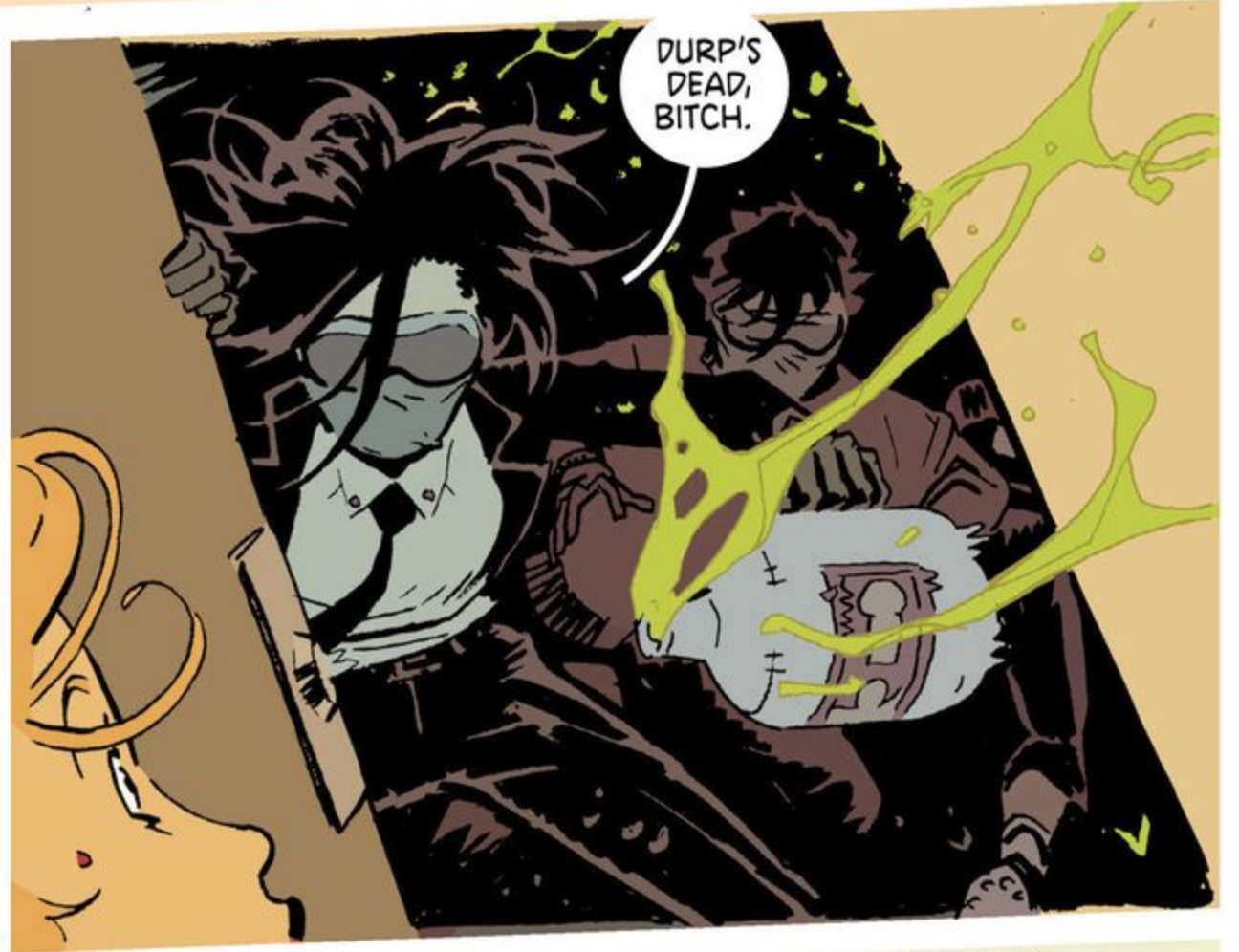


GRRGHAGH~!

CRASH



DURP?



DURP'S
DEAD,
BITCH.



SPLASH!



AAIEEEEE~!

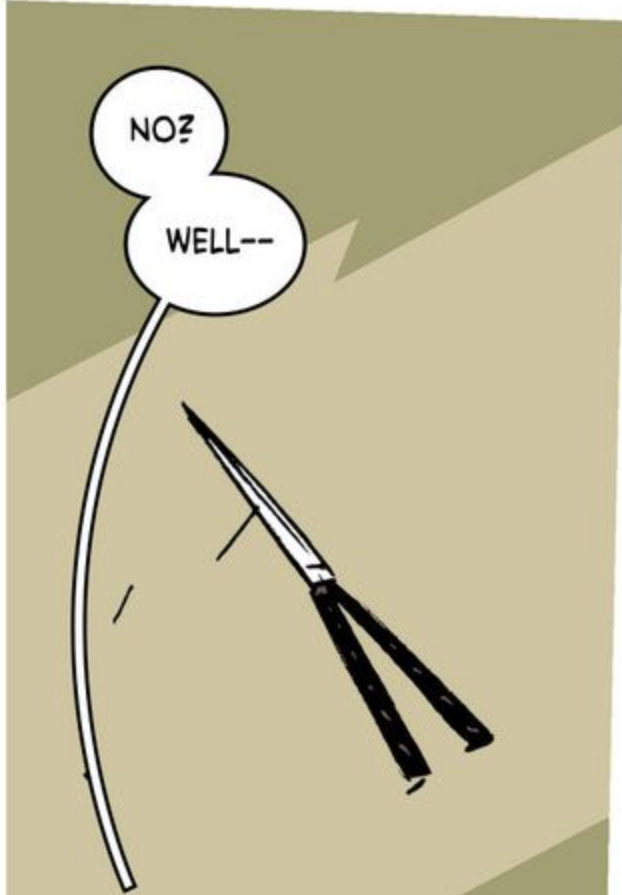


WOW. NEVER
ACTUALLY SEEN
WHAT IT DOES
UP CLOSE...

WEIRDO!
WHAT DID
YOU DO?

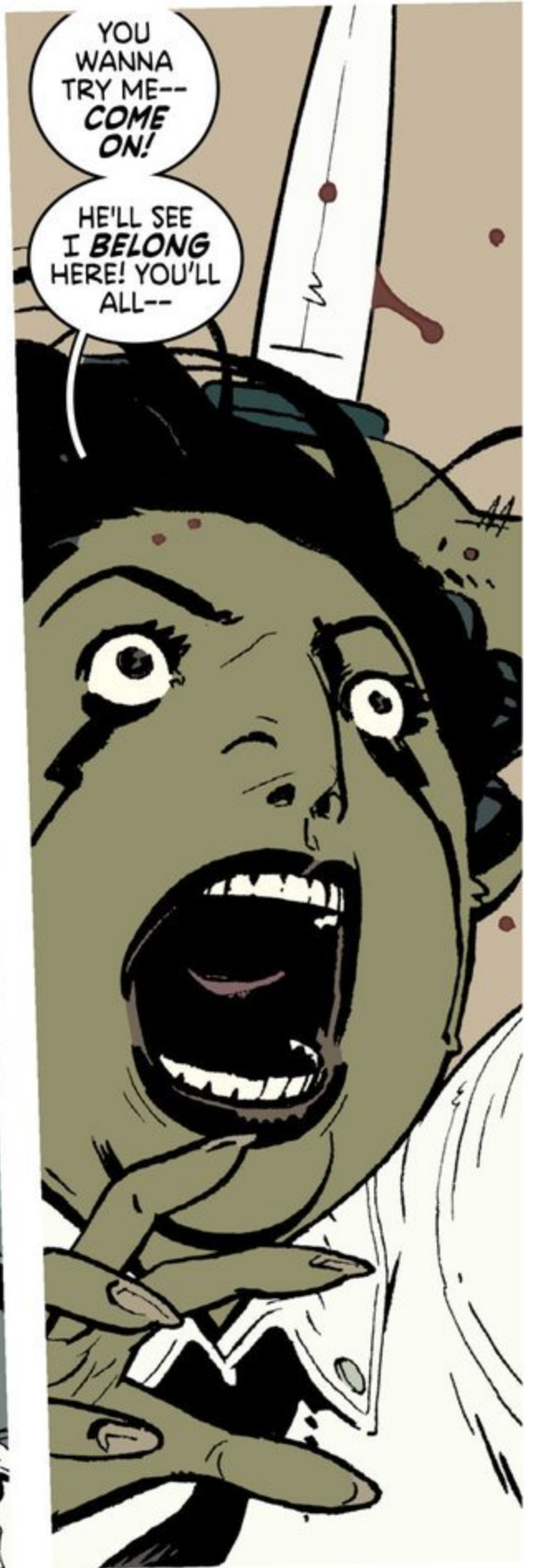


IT'S
CHLORAMINE--
AMMONIA AND
BLEACH.

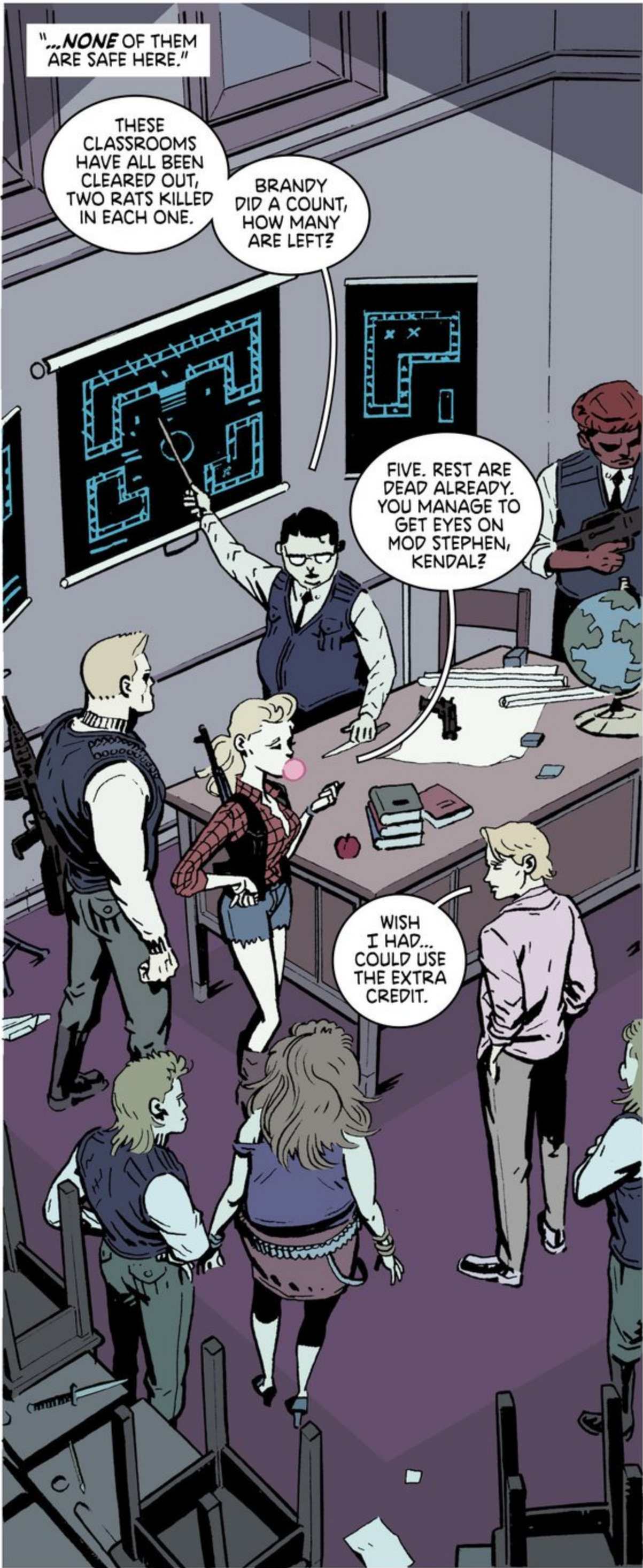


















TO BE CONTINUED...

DEAD LETTER OFFICE

Send comments and questions to
[WriteRemender@gmail.com!](mailto:WriteRemender@gmail.com)
Mark letters "OK to print".

RR - One of the ideas that excited me about making this book was an examination of human behavior through the social interactions of teenagers, much, in the same way, *Lord of the Flies* did. To see how the cliques form, how cruel one tribe is to another. To see this already savage sociological experiment play out in a situation exponentially more dangerous, with life or death consequences. It was clear to me early in the development of the series that in order for this to have any emotional weight we would have to really build the entire cast up before getting to the battle royal. It's a very difficult chapter in this book now that we are here, and I'm actually writing it. Some of our students fell into the school because they had nowhere else to go, but, for the most part, these students have opted into this terrible place. Trained and educated by criminals, thugs, assassins, zealots and gangsters these kids have been indoctrinated to think that the bloody competition that they are engaging in is a rite of passage, a necessary step in their ascension to take the thrones held by their parents and sponsors. Over the next five issues the cast we've been focusing on will have to make decisions that will define who they will become moving in the future, defined by choices, whether they can exert independent thought and swim against the stream, or if they will fall in line in accordance with the norms of their situation. This is where we get to see who each of these characters truly are. There will be a lot of heartbreak but also some joy coming. There's a bit of commentary sprinkled throughout this, hopefully, nothing heavy-handed, but something to say about the students in this school as they represent the world we live in.

Greetings and/or salutations,

I've been enjoying your work for a while now, in fact, I've written you a few times (I had a letter published back in *Gigantic* and suggested the letters column for this book be called "Words about Fucking") but I needed to write about DEADLY CLASS again. After every issue, I read the book "owns" me for the next couple of days. Regardless of what's happening in my chaotic overworked adult life, DEADLY CLASS takes me back to High School in the late '80s. I was also a drug-addled outcast longing for acceptance while pretending I didn't care about anything, and while I may never have actually killed anyone I certainly wished it upon many a tormentor/supposed friend. But it's not the similarities that affect me. I find myself missing those days in a way I never thought possible at the time. It's odd, while I hated every day of my life at the time, looking back on it now, I feel like life has never felt as real or as visceral as it did back then. It felt like every day something momentous was happening that the world could end any day, (And that's not just cuz of the ever-present threat of potential nuclear annihilation), every look, glance, or sentence seemed to have a thousand meanings and my life depended on figuring them out.

To put it another way, everything felt turned up to eleven! I don't know, I'm happier now than I've ever been, and I feel like I understand myself and those around me better than I ever have, but your book makes me long for those days of fear and wonder, and not in a "Damn I'd wish I could do things differently" way which is how I usually think about them. I guess what I'm trying to say is thank you and I hope the series keeps going till graduation... if Marcus makes it that far.

Don't let the bastards get you down,
Jacob Ohlhausen

P.S. Feel free to do whatever you want with this letter, but don't show it to my mom... she's suffered enough.

RR - Ha. Mine too. We'll keep it our secret. Thank you for writing in, Jacob, and for your continued support. In hindsight, you had the very best idea for a letters page ever and I have failed you, and myself, for not selecting it. I've often thought that the reason everything felt so important back in those formative teenage years is because everything you did was for the first time. Every day you did something new. Experienced the new emotion. And that takes a lot of processing. And without having any idea how it will turn out. The mystery and drama of life are never more intense than in those blossoming teenage years. Plus, you know, all the hormones. I think I've said it before on this letters page, but it becomes very difficult for me to not edit the story sometimes. I'll read some old journal entries and want to clean up the ugly honesty to make it more palatable. But that would rob the story of its authenticity and then it wouldn't feel like an honest snapshot of the teenage experience. But holy shit can it be hard to be honest.

As I reread the series again and then got caught up, one phrase kept coming to mind: pitch perfect.

I love that you have a letters column. Reading it, I kept coming back to "pitch perfect" being the phrase I would want to compliment DEADLY CLASS with.

I'm not the gushing, sycophant kind of guy. I've read your stuff at least as far back as *Dark Horse* and have seen you improve over the years — which is high praise since most people flatline where they are good enough. But all of your work has tended to have something off to the narrative flow. Until DEADLY CLASS. It's a tight story. The hints of coherence that I was seeing emerging in other books have fucking arrived in this story. This is the book, for me, where your craftsmanship has hit it.

The story itself, the characters, the creative team you have with you, all of it is solid. You (and Craig) nail things like drug use in a way that most writers don't. The entire initial arc through Vegas keyed in on so many elements of my early 20s that I got giddy reading it (and re-reading it). So. Keep it going pitch perfect.

Felix

RR - I take a different method with each one of my books. I try not to do the same thing twice and that includes pacing approach, character building, story structure, so each of my books should read differently than the others. Some will appeal to some people and others won't. I guess it's like experimenting with different flavors of ice cream. Glad you found the one you liked, we'll keep making it.

To the most lovely DEADLY CLASS team,

DEADLY CLASS has managed to appeal to everything I love and didn't even know I loved the

colors, art, writing and the reference to the best NES game to have existed, *Punch Out*. With the cliffhanger at the end of issue #16, it seems like it could turn into a mixture of *Reservoir Dogs* and *Battle Royale* (especially with the cover resembling the painting at the end of that movie) with everyone trying to find the rats. A boy can only hope, but I know it'll still be fantastic no matter what.

Thank you for making the comic that makes me want to make comics.

-Dom Vaughn

RR - Glad to hear the concoction of pop-culture references appeals to you as well. It's nice to go back to those years of my youth and dig through that stuff, picking what we will use and where. As for your dream mix, it sounds like you're going to get your wish because everyone in the school is hunting the rats. Their numbers are already whittled down considerably.

People will come up to me at conventions and tell me that something that I've written has made them want to make comics and I have a mixed reaction. It's a genuinely incredible compliment that something you do inspire somebody to want to do the same, but at the same time it's such hard work, and so often it's spent in solitary confinement, and in an industry that can be so frustrating... but that's sort of life. We're all just locked in our own heads. Creating comic books has allowed me a place to share what goes on in that cage. And in the end, beyond all of the hard work, the years spent alone in a room, it is very rewarding. Because connecting with humans on an honest level, finding that mutual identification is an inherent and important component of being a human. If you decide to go make comics, I wish you the best of luck.

Rick,

I can honestly say that a week with a new issue of *Low*, *Black Science* or *DEADLY CLASS*, and now *Tokyo Ghost*, is a bloody awesome week. As a writer myself, your stories are inspiring and affecting, and I look forward to that day when I can produce something as great as what you are producing now; however, it's not just the characters or the worlds that you create, but more specifically your writing — the emotions you express in the narrative, the failures, and the triumphs, all authentically told, rich and relevant. And the art that accompanies your words within all these books are equally as stunning. I will hate to see any of your current stories prematurely end.

Thanks, Rick.
Braiden A.

RR - Well, the good news is none of them will prematurely end. When they end is constantly changing based on the amount of ideas that we have cooked up and how excited we are by them. None of them will be ending anytime soon.

See you back here next month as we dig into the relationship between Saya and Willie.

- Rick

TRANSMISSIONS FROM A BASEMENT

Welcome back, friends!

Hope everyone's keeping warm out there. When it gets too cold, gray and snowy outside grab yourself a quality comic and some hot coco and curl up in front of the old Yule Log DVD. Ah, blessed days.

Last month we asked you all to send in some fan art, and we've gotten some amazing entries already! Everyone's favorite lovebirds from the Isles of Los Angeles Debbie Decay and Led Dent seem to have made a real impression, but our girl Saya from DEADLY CLASS also got a badass treatment. Great stuff. Keep sending 'em in and we'll keep printing them!

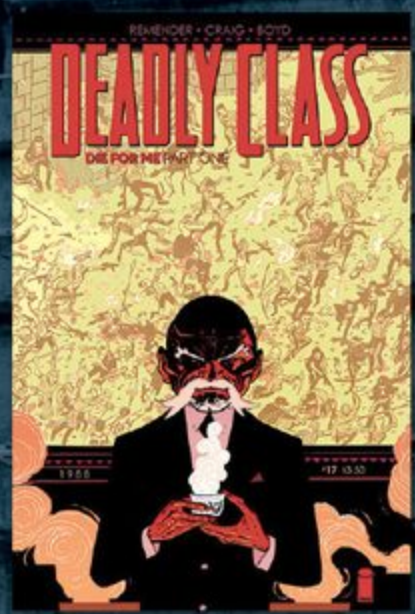
We'll get back to wrapping up this year's load of comics so you'll have something to read over the winter! Blessed holidays and a happy New Year to our readers from all of us at **Team Remender**.

Catch you all back here in the future of 2016!

Cheers,
Sebastian Girner



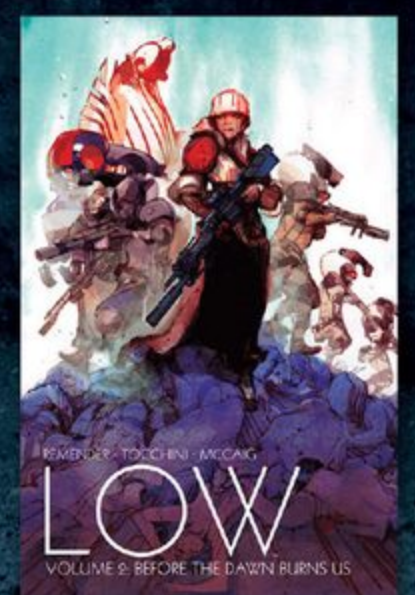
BLACK SCIENCE
ISSUE #18



DEADLY CLASS
ISSUE #17



TOKYO GHOST
ISSUE #4



LOW
VOLUME 2

OUT
NOW

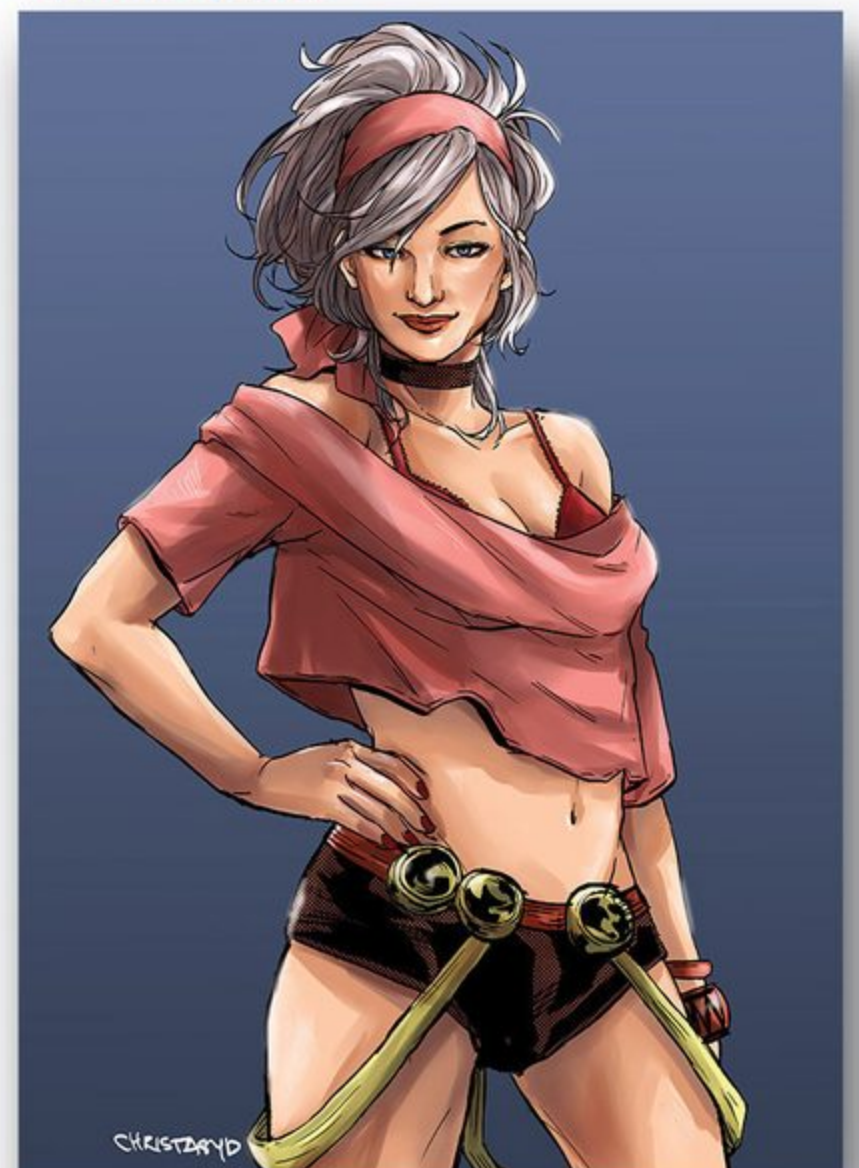
Charles Simmons



Victor Gonzales



Christa Sydney



Ashley Lanni



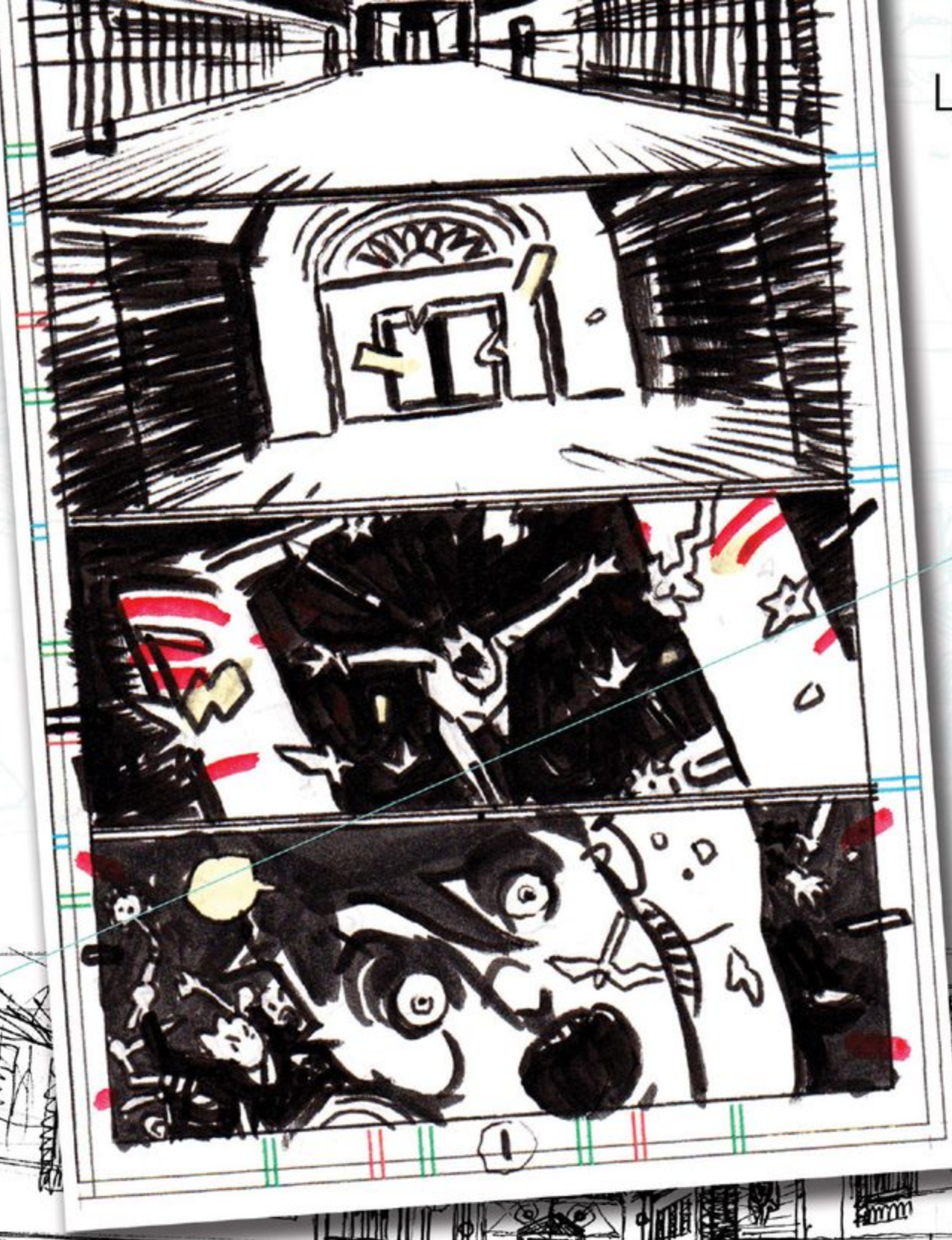
LAYOUTS

PENCILS

COLORS BY JORDAN
LETTERS BY RUS

WES
CRAIG'S

PROJECTS





WOULDN'T HAVE KILLED MY FAVORITE
TEACHER IN A BOTCHED ATTEMPT TO
MURDER THE RUSSIAN ASSHOLE WHO
WAS BLACKMAILING ME.



AND I'D HAVE MISSED OUT
ON BEING THE TARGET OF A
FRESHMAN CLASS MANHUNT.

FUCK!



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A LESBIAN WEREWOLF GOING TO WAR
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DEADLY CLASS

DIE FOR ME PART TWO



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